

Listing of Claims:

1. (currently amended) An e-coupon distribution method for distributing e-coupons redeemable for value in the purchase of goods or services from a seller, comprising:
 - maintaining mobile user profile data and seller profile data in database memory;
 - receiving a request from a mobile electronic device of a user to browse at least one e-coupon;
 - receiving location information for the requesting mobile electronic device;
 - determining ~~a plurality of sellers~~ at least one seller local to the location of the mobile electronic device and ~~a plurality of~~ at least one corresponding ~~e-coupon~~ e-coupon available from said ~~sellers~~ at least one seller;
 - sending e-coupon availability data to the mobile electronic device;
 - receiving a request for at least one e-coupon of a seller from the mobile electronic device;
 - determining whether to provide said seller's e-coupon to the mobile electronic device in response to the request by
 - determining the number of pending mobile requests during a processing cycle;
 - calculating an initial threshold number of requests for the processing cycle based on the seller's margin for the goods or services associated with the e-coupon, the advertising fee charged for the distribution of the e-coupon, estimated rates of e-coupon redemption, and the number of additional e-coupons expected to be offered during a processing cycle by other sellers local to the location of the mobile electronic device in response to the mobile user request;
 - authorizing the provision of said e-coupon when the number of pending mobile requests during the processing cycle is equal to or greater than the threshold number; and
 - sending said e-coupon to the mobile electronic device upon authorization.
2. (cancelled)

3. (cancelled)
4. (currently amended) The e-coupon distribution method of claim 1 wherein said mobile user profile is maintained in a first database memory location and said seller profile data are-is maintained in separate-a second database memoriesmemory location.
5. (currently amended) The e-coupon distribution method of claim 1 wherein said authorization step occurs at the end of a the processing cycle.
6. (currently amended) The e-coupon distribution method of claim 1 further comprising:
 - maintaining in the mobile user profile a quota of e-coupons the user is allowed to receive;
 - receiving a notification that said mobile electronic device is ~~located within~~ at the location of said seller;
 - receiving said seller location information;
 - determining whether said e-coupon sent to the mobile user has been redeemed;and
 - upon determining said e-coupon has been redeemed, increasing a the quota of e-coupons by one in the mobile user profile.
7. (cancelled)
8. (currently amended) The e-coupon distribution method of claim ~~7-1~~ wherein said initial threshold is determined ~~from~~ by dividing an-the advertising fee for said e-coupon by a product of ~~an-the~~ estimated number of redemptionsrate of e-coupon redemption times the seller's margin for the goods or services associated with the e-coupona-profit.
9. (cancelled)
10. (currently amended) The e-coupon distribution method of claim ~~9-1~~ wherein the step of determining whether to provide said seller's e-coupon to the mobile electronic

device in response to the mobile request further comprises: providing said e-coupon to the mobile electronic device occurs upon

determining said number of the sellers having pending requests for said an e-coupon that is not is one of greater than or equal to said the initial threshold calculated for them, and;

after applying an optimal-optimizing consolidation process is applied to all sellers with insufficient pending requests, including eliminating at least one such seller to obtain increased estimated rates of e-coupon redemption, recalculating using such increased estimated rates of e-coupon redemption to determine an optimized threshold number, and authorizing the provision of said e-coupon when the number of pending mobile requests during the processing cycle is greater than or equal to an the optimal-optimized threshold number.

11. (cancelled)

12. (currently amended) An e-coupon distribution method for distributing e-coupons redeemable for value in the purchase of goods or services from a seller, comprising:

- (i) maintaining a mobile user profile and seller profile data in database memory;
- (ii) receiving a request for at least one e-coupon from a mobile electronic device of a user;
- (iii) receiving location information for the requesting mobile electronic device;
- (iv) determining a seller local to the location of the mobile electronic device;
- (v) determining an initial threshold number of requests for the seller based on the seller's margin for the goods or services associated with the e-coupon, the advertising fee charged for the distribution of the e-coupon, estimated rates of e-coupon redemption, and the number of additional e-coupons expected to be offered during a processing cycle by other sellers local to the location of the mobile electronic device in response to the mobile user request;
- (vi) determining whether a the number of pending requests during the processing cycle for said e-coupon is greater than or equal to the initial threshold; and

(vii) when the number of pending requests for said e-coupon is greater than or equal to the initial threshold, sending said e-coupon to the mobile electronic device

13. (currently amended) The e-coupon distribution method of claim 12, further comprising, wherein when the number of pending requests for said e-coupon is determined to be less than the seller's initial threshold, the following additional steps:

(viii) applying an ~~optimal~~-optimizing consolidation process to the seller including eliminating at least one other seller to obtain increased estimated rates of e-coupon redemption and using such increased estimated rates of e-coupon redemption to determine an optimized threshold number;

(ix) determining whether the number of pending requests for said e-coupon is greater than or equal to an ~~optimal~~the optimized threshold number; and

(x) when the number of pending requests for said e-coupon is greater than or equal to the ~~optimal~~-optimized threshold number, sending said e-coupon to the mobile electronic device.

14. (currently amended) The e-coupon distribution method of claim 13, further comprising, wherein when in step (ix) the number of pending requests for said e-coupon is determined to be less than the ~~optimal~~-optimized threshold number as determined in step (ix), the additional step of sending a notification to the mobile user that no e-coupon for the seller will be provided.

15. (original) The e-coupon distribution method of claim 14 further comprising logging said request for the e-coupon from the seller in said user profile and said seller profile.

16. (currently amended) An e-coupon distribution system for distributing e-coupons redeemable for value in the purchase of goods or services from a seller, comprising:

a memory for storing mobile user profile data and seller profile data;

a profile proxy server to receive a request to browse at least one e-coupon from a mobile electronic device of a user;

said profile proxy server to receive a location of the requesting mobile electronic device;

said profile proxy server to determine a ~~plurality of sellers~~ at least one seller local to the location of the mobile electronic device and a ~~plurality of~~ at least one corresponding ~~e-coupon~~ coupon available from said sellers;

said profile proxy server to send e-coupon availability data to the mobile electronic device;

said profile proxy server to receive a request for at least one e-coupon of a seller from the mobile electronic device;

a commerce server to receive said request from said profile proxy server;

said commerce server to log said request in said mobile user profile and said seller profile;

said commerce server to determine whether to provide said seller's e-coupon to the mobile electronic device in response to the request by

determining the number of pending mobile requests during a processing cycle;

calculating an initial threshold number of requests for the processing cycle based on the seller's margin for the goods or services associated with the e-coupon, the advertising fee charged for the distribution of the e-coupon, estimated rates of e-coupon redemption, and the number of additional e-coupons expected to be offered during a processing cycle by other sellers local to the location of the mobile electronic device in response to the mobile user request;

at the end of ~~a~~ the processing cycle, said commerce server to authorize the provision of said e-coupon when the number of pending mobile requests during the processing cycle is equal to or greater than the threshold number; and

said commerce server to send said e-coupon to the mobile electronic device responsive to said authorizing step.

17. (cancelled)

18. (currently amended) The e-coupon distribution system of claim ~~17~~ 16 wherein said initial threshold is determined ~~from~~ by dividing an the advertising fee for said e-coupon by a product of an the estimated number of redemptionsrate of e-coupon redemption times the seller's e-coupona profit margin for the goods or services associated with the said e-coupon.

19. (currently amended) The e-coupon distribution system of claim 16 wherein upon receiving the request for at least one e-coupon from the mobile electronic device, said profile proxy server ~~to sends~~ sends a reply message to the mobile electronic device.

20. (currently amended) The e-coupon distribution system of claim 19 wherein said reply message comprises a quota of e-coupons available to the user and an expected time to receive said e-coupon.

21. (currently amended) The e-coupon distribution system of claim 16 wherein said seller profile data comprises:

- a seller identification;
- a seller name;
- a seller address;
- a seller billing information;
- a seller instant contact address;
- a seller business type;
- a number of e-coupons allocated for distribution;
- a type of e-coupon;
- an estimated ~~number of redemptions~~ rate of e-coupon redemption;
- a number of pending requests; and
- a number of pending ~~redemptions~~ coupons provided to users for redemption.

22. (original) The e-coupon distribution system of claim 21 wherein the instant contact address is a phone number, an instant message address, an email address, or any

other method by which the seller can be notified as soon as the e-coupon for the seller has been distributed.

23. (original) The e-coupon distribution system of claim 21 wherein the seller business type is described by a set of keywords.

24. (currently amended) The e-coupon distribution system of claim 21 wherein the type of e-coupon comprises at least the following information supplied by the seller:
a time condition defining when said e-coupon can be distributed;
a range condition defining where said e-coupon can be distributed; and
a ~~profit margin for the goods or services associated with the defining how much~~
~~profit the seller can make from a redeemed e-coupon.~~

25. (currently amended) The e-coupon distribution system of claim ~~21~~16 wherein said mobile user profile comprises:
a mobile user identification;
a mobile user instant contact address;
a quota of e-coupons; and
a number of ~~effective requests for e-coupons by the user that have resulted in e-~~
coupon redemptions.

26. (original) The e-coupon distribution system of claim 25 wherein the instant contact address is a phone number, an instant message address, an email address, an SMS address, or any other method by which the user can be notified of said quota of e-coupons and an expected time to receive said e-coupon.

27. (original) The e-coupon distribution system of claim 25 wherein the quota of e-coupons defines a maximum number of e-coupons said commerce server could send to said mobile user during a defined period.

28. (original) The e-coupon distribution system of claim 25 further comprising said commerce server to receive the instant contact address of the mobile user and the location of the mobile electronic device.

29. (currently amended) The e-coupon distribution system of claim ~~25~~27 further comprising:

said profile proxy server to receive a notification that said mobile electronic device is ~~located within~~at the location of said seller;
said profile proxy server to receive said seller location information;
said commerce server to determine whether said e-coupon sent to the mobile user has been redeemed; and
upon determining said e-coupon has been redeemed, said commerce server to increase the quota of e-coupons by one in the mobile user profile.

30. (currently amended) The e-coupon distribution system of claim 25 wherein when said commerce server ~~to logs~~logs said request ~~in step (ix)~~ in said mobile user profile and said seller profile, the commerce server:

creates a mobile user pending request record in the mobile user profile;
decreases the quota of e-coupons in the mobile user profile by one;
creates a seller pending request record in the seller profile; and
increases ~~an~~the estimated number of coupons provided to users for redemption~~redeems by a proper value~~ in the seller profile.

31. (original) The e-coupon distribution system of claim 30 wherein said mobile user pending request record contains a request time and the seller identification.

32. (original) The e-coupon distribution system of claim 30 wherein said seller pending request record contains a request time and the mobile user identification.

33. (cancelled)

34. (currently amended) The e-coupon distribution system of claim ~~33~~30 wherein upon determining said number of pending requests is ~~not~~ greater than nor equal to said initial threshold, said commerce server increases the estimated number of coupons provided to users for redemption~~redeems~~ in the seller profile.

35. (currently amended) The e-coupon distribution system of claim ~~33~~30 wherein upon determining said number of pending requests is greater than or equal to said initial threshold, said commerce server:

- creates a pending coupon record in the seller profile;

- sends said pending coupon record to the seller via the seller instant contact address;

- creates a pending ~~redeem~~-record of coupons available for redemption in the mobile user profile; and

- sends the pending ~~redeem~~-record of coupons available for redemption to the mobile electronic device.

36. (original) The e-coupon distribution system of claim 35 wherein at the end of a processing cycle, said commerce server further:

- removes all pending request records from the seller profile; and

- resets the estimated number of redeems to zero in the seller profile.

37. (original) The e-coupon distribution system of claim 35 wherein said pending coupon record comprises:

- a serial number;

- a redeem confirmation number;

- an e-coupon text description;

- an issue time;

- an expire time;

- a number of mobile users who will receive said e-coupon;

- an estimated number of redeems; and

- a number of redeems.

38. (original) The e-coupon distribution system of claim 37 wherein the number of mobile users who will receive said e-coupon, the estimated number of redeems, and the number of redeems are used to estimate an effectiveness of distribution of said e-coupon.

39. (original) The e-coupon distribution system of claim 35 wherein said pending redeem record comprises:

- a serial number;
- an e-coupon text description;
- a request time;
- an issue time;
- an expire time; and
- a seller identification;

40. (original) The e-coupon distribution system of claim 39 wherein the request time in the pending redeem record is equal to the request time in the mobile user pending request record.

41. (original) The e-coupon distribution system of claim 39 wherein said commerce server further determines whether said pending redeem record has the request time equal to the mobile user pending request record.

42. (original) The e-coupon distribution system of claim 41 wherein upon determining said pending redeem record does not have the request time equal to the mobile user pending request record:

- said quota of e-coupons is increased by one in the mobile user profile; and
- said commerce server removes the pending request record from the mobile user profile.

43. (currently amended) An article of manufacture comprising:

- a computer-usable medium having computer-readable program code embodied therein for causing a distribution of e-coupons redeemable for value in the purchase of

goods or services from a seller, the computer-readable program code in said article of manufacture comprising:

computer-readable program code for causing a computer to maintain mobile user profile and seller profile data in database memory;

computer-readable program code for causing a computer to receive a request to browse at least one e-coupon from a mobile electronic device of a user;

computer-readable program code for causing a computer to receive a location of the requesting mobile electronic device;

computer-readable program code for causing a computer to determine a plurality of sellers local to the location of the mobile electronic device and a plurality of corresponding e-coupons available from said sellers;

computer-readable program code for causing a computer to provide e-coupon availability data to the mobile electronic device;

computer-readable program code for causing a computer to receive a request for at least one e-coupon of a seller from the mobile electronic device;

computer-readable program code for causing a computer to log said request for an e-coupon of a seller in said mobile user profile and said seller profile;

computer-readable program code for causing a computer to determine whether to provide said seller's e-coupon to the mobile electronic device in response to the request by

determining the number of pending mobile requests during a processing cycle;

calculating an initial threshold number of requests for the processing cycle based on the seller's margin for the goods or services associated with the e-coupon, the advertising fee charged for the distribution of the e-coupon, estimated rates of e-coupon redemption, and the number of additional e-coupons expected to be offered during a processing cycle by other sellers local to the location of the mobile electronic device in response to the mobile user request;

computer-readable program code for causing a computer, at the end of a the processing cycle, to authorize the provision of said e-coupon when the number of

pending mobile requests during the processing cycle is equal to or greater than the threshold number; and

computer-readable program code for causing a computer to provide said e-coupon to the mobile electronic device responsive to said authorizing step.

44. (currently amended) A computer program product for use with an output device, said computer program product comprising:

a computer-usable medium having computer-readable program code embodied in said medium for causing a distribution of e-coupons redeemable for value in the purchase of goods or services from a seller, said computer program product having:

computer-readable program code for causing a computer to maintain mobile user profile and seller profile data in database memory;

computer-readable program code for causing a computer to receive a request to browse at least one e-coupon from a mobile electronic device of a user;

computer-readable program code for causing a computer to receive a location of the requesting mobile electronic device;

computer-readable program code for causing a computer to determine a plurality of sellers local to the location of the mobile electronic device and a plurality of corresponding e-coupons available from said sellers;

computer-readable program code for causing a computer to provide e-coupon availability data to the mobile electronic device;

computer-readable program code for causing a computer to receive a request for at least one e-coupon of a seller from the mobile electronic device;

computer-readable program code for causing a computer to log said request for an e-coupon of a seller in said mobile user profile and said seller profile;

computer-readable program code for causing a computer to determine whether to provide said seller's e-coupon to the mobile electronic device in response to the request by

determining the number of pending mobile requests during a processing cycle;

calculating an initial threshold number of requests for the processing cycle based on the seller's margin for the goods or services associated with the e-coupon, the advertising fee charged for the distribution of the e-coupon, estimated rates of e-coupon redemption, and the number of additional e-coupons expected to be offered during a processing cycle by other sellers local to the location of the mobile electronic device in response to the mobile user request;

computer-readable program code for causing a computer, at the end of a the processing cycle, to authorize the provision of said e-coupon when the number of pending mobile requests during the processing cycle is equal to or greater than the threshold number; and

computer-readable program code for causing a computer to provide said e-coupon to the mobile electronic device responsive to said authorizing step.